SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS IN MEDIEVAL/RENAISSANCE HISTORY
(FOR M.A. MAJOR FIELD, PH.D. MINOR FIELD AND PH.D. MAJOR FIELD EXAMINATIONS)

To the student: These readings are organized under various rubrics, but many of them are cross-over texts that can profitably be read in the light of and compared to books under other rubrics. Be prepared to do some of that crossing over in your examinations.

In your overall “count” of items, articles count as 1/4 of a book, so 4 articles = 1 full item.

PhD students should include at least 3 readings in a language other than English (these may come from your special topic relating to your dissertation interests).

**EARLY MIDDLE AGES, C.350-C.1100**

Part A: Chronology.

M.A. students: Choose any two topics from and read 10 of the items that pertain to each. (= 20 books)

PhD students: Choose all three topics from part A and read 10 of the items pertaining to each. Be sure to read at least 2 classics in each topic. (=30 books).

Recommended textbooks for background:


1. Change and continuity in the ancient and early medieval worlds (300-600)

**Classics**

Brown, Peter, *World of Late Antiquity* (1971)

Bury, J. B. *History of the Later Roman Empire*, 2 vols. (1923)

Cameron, A. *Circus factions: Blues and greens at Rome and Byzantium* (1976)

Dopsch, A. *The Economic and social foundations of European civilization* (1937)


Pirenne, Henri. *Mohammed and Charlemagne* (1939)

Recent Contributions

Curta, F. *The making of the Slavs: History and archaeology of the lower Danube region, ca. 500-700* (2001)
Fowden, G. *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (1993).

James, E. *Europe’s Barbarians, 200-600* (2009)
*Journal of Late Antiquity* 1 (2008) (all articles)
Rosenwein, B. *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (2006)

2. Change and continuity in the early medieval polities (600-900)

Classics

Bulliet, R. W. *Conversion to Islam in the medieval period: an essay in quantitative history* (1979)
Fichtenaun, Heinrich. *The Carolingian Empire* (1957)
Levison, W. *England and the continent in the eighth century* (1946)
Wallace-Hadrill, J. M. *The Barbarian West* (1962)

Recent Contributions

Wickham, Chris, *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (2005), concentrate on Gaul, Britain, and Italy
3. Change and Continuity in the period 900-1100

**Classics**

- Ganshof, F. L., *Feudalism* (1952)
- Ostrogorsky, *History of The Byzantine State* (1968)

**Recent Contributions**

- Read the reactions to this as well, all in *Past and Present* 152 (1996) by Stephen D. White, Dominique Barthélemy et al.
- Geary, P. *Furta Sacra* (rev. 1990)
- Geary, P. *Living with the Dead* (1994)
- Reynolds, S. *Fiefs and vassals* (1994)
- Saïf, O., *The Politics of Knowledge in Pre-modern Islam* (Chapel Hill, 2006)
- Urbanczyk, Przemyslaw, ed. *Europe around the Year 1000* (2001) (some articles are not in English)

Themes.
M.A. students: Read at least 5 books from each of the four themes. Include 1 classic for each of these. Total books = 20.

PhD students: Choose 10 books from each of the four themes. Include at least 2 classics for each of these. Add a topic—your dissertation topic—and decide on 10 crucial works that pertain to it. Total books = 50.

1. Gender

Classics:

- Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* (1981)
- Wemple, S. F. *Women in Frankish Society: Marriage and cloister, 500 to 900* (1985)

Recent contributions:

- Coon, Lynda L. *Sacred Fictions* (1997)
- James, Liz, ed., *Women, Men and Eunuchs* (1977)
- Rapoport, Y. *Marriage, Money and Divorce in Medieval Islamic Society* (2005)
- Stafford, P. *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers* (1983)
2. Science, intellectual life, and literacy

Classics:
Clanchy, Michael. *From Memory to Written Record* (1993).
Harris, W. V. *Ancient literacy*. Cambridge, MA: 1989, Ch. 8.
Marrou, H. I (trans. G. Lamb), *History of Education in Antiquity* (1956), Ch. 9

(Christianity and Classical Education and Epilogue)
Laistner, MLW, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe* (1957)
Smalley, Beryl, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (1952)

Recent contributions:
Ganz, David, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance* (1990)
Godman, P. *Poets and Emperors* (1987)
McKitterick, R. *Uses of literacy in early mediaeval Europe* (1990)
Stock, B. *The Implications of Literacy* (1987)

3. Material Culture and Economy

**Classics:**
- Duby, G. *Rural economy and country life in the medieval West* (1998)
- Pirenne, Henri. *Mohammed and Charlemagne* (1939)
- White, L. T., *Medieval technology and social change* (1964)

**Recent contributions:**

4. Religion and Religious Life

**Classics**
- Bryer, Anthony and Judith Herrin, ed. *Iconoclasm: Papers given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (1977)
- Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast* (repeated)
- Smalley, B. *The study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (1952)

**Recent Contributions**
- Flint, V. *The rise of magic in early medieval Europe* (1991)
Liu, X. Silk and religion: an exploration of material life and the thought of people, AD 600-1200 (1998)
McLaughlin, Megan. Sex, Gender, and Episcopal Authority in an Age of Reform (2010)
Rapp, C. Holy bishops in late antiquity: the nature of Christian leadership in an age of transition (2005)
Rosenwein, Barbara To Be the Neighbor of St. Peter (1989)
Rustomiji, Nerina. The Garden and the fire: Heaven and hell in Islamic culture (2008)

Let your exam readers know, at least 3 weeks before you take your exam, which topics and books you have chosen.

--------------------------------------------------------------------------
Some possible themes to get you started:

1. Change and continuity in the ancient and early medieval worlds (300-600)

**Debates:**
Issues of continuity and change between late antiquity and the early Middle Ages – which area – European, Byzantium, Islam – continued the classical tradition the most?

Ethnicity – was there a barbarian identity? If so, how was it constructed / displayed?

Historians – why they construct this period the way they do

2. Change and continuity in the early medieval polities (600-900)

**Debates:**
nature of the state and political identity in the early Middle Ages – and implications for long-term history

Nature of early medieval kingship

Conversion – how did it come about, what did it mean?

Place of Anglo-Saxon England – peripheral to Carolingian Europe or a separate sphere?

Strength of the church – subordinate to the state or the main shaper of early medieval identity?

3. Change and Continuity in the period 900-1100

Debates:
  - What was the revolution of 1000 – or indeed was there one? Did it only occur in western Europe?
  - Did Byzantium and the Islamic world have their “feudalisms” or are these scholarly constructs based on western experience?
  - What have been the debates on Western feudalism, and where are we now?

3. Material Culture and Economy

Debates:
  - Economic decline or growth in early Middle Ages?
  - Technological decline or growth?
  - Impact of archaeology in revising interpretations
  - When and why did the economic growth that would later lead to the “rise of the west” begin?
  - How important was the eastern and Islamic contribution to the material and economic revival of Europe?
LATE MIDDLE AGES, c.1100- c.1600

General Orientation
Bibliographie internationale de l'Humanisme et de la Renaissance. v.1- (1965-).
Bibliografia italiana di studi sull'umanesimo ed il Rinascimento. v. 1- (1989-).
Iter (on-line bibliography of the Renaissance Society of America).

Topic 1: The Worlds of Humanism

Classics

Recent Historiography

Topic 2: Religious Cultures

Classics

Recent Historiography

**Topic 3: Urbanism, Economy and Society**

**Classics**

**Recent Historiography**

**Topic 4: Textual and Visual Literacy**

**Classics**

**Recent Historiography**
In the mid-sixteenth century, the literary genre which came to be known as "books of secrets" arose to become an international and long-lasting success. Suggested bibliography for comprehensive examinations in medieval/renaissance history. (for M.a. major field, ph.D. minor field and ph.D. major field examinations. To the student: These readings are organized under various rubrics, but many of them are cross-over texts that can profitably be read in the light of and compared to books under other rubrics. Historians: why they construct this period the way they do. Change and continuity in the early medieval polities (600-900). Debates: nature of the state and political identity in the early Middle Ages and implications for long-term history. Nature of early medieval kingship. Conversion: how did it come about, what did it mean? The Folio Society publishes a wide range of history books covering the Medieval & Renaissance periods, from the machinations of popes and kings to the ordinary people and society. Each rare book includes beautiful, lovingly researched illustrations. Sign Up to the Folio Society Newsletter for Exclusive Offers and Updates. Submit. Contact Us.